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Captain Lemly refers derisively to my supposed ignorance of other Treaties. My ignorance can not be defended, but I must protest against any American officer, wearing the uniform of the United States Army, suggesting that the American agents at Geneva—Charles Francis Adams, Judge E. R. Hoar, and Bancroft Davis—were in any way comparable with the ringsters at Bogota, who, according to his own statement, regarded the Treaty as a means to their private spoils.

I have read the despatches to and from Mr. Beaupré and Secretary Hay and President Roosevelt. If Captain Lemly read them, too, their dates and contents must have strangely changed between my reading and his.

On inquiry and by consulting *Who's Who?* and other sources of information, I find that Captain Lemly, U. S. A., was for twelve years Director of the National Military School at Bogota. The Colombian Government gave him a commission as Colonel, and presumably paid his wages. It also made him Commissioner General for Colombia at the World's Columbian Exposition. Have we a right to infer, therefore, that he is not prejudiced *against* the Colombians?

Of Captain Lemly's final shot at Roosevelt's lack of magnanimity, we must agree to differ.

He says that the Panama Question is insufficiently known. He is right. The Colombians and the lobby at Washington which has so industriously pushed the bill for paying Colombia twenty-five million dollars, have consistently tried to make the American public forget the rights and desires of the Province of Panama. This Province for fifty years did not wish to belong to Colombia, and it repeatedly strove to win independence from Colombia, with which it had neither common interests nor common principles. When the American Colonies strove for their independence, France helped them. Why should not the United States have helped the Panamanians in their struggle?

And now we propose to present the Colombian Government with twenty-five million dollars. The most it asked in 1903 was ten million. Having found that, in their blackmailing scheme, they had overreached themselves, they sent General Reyes to Washington with an offer to sign the Treaty for eight millions. Mr. Wayne MacVeagh, who was attorney for Reyes and Colombia, told me that they would have taken five. From five millions to twenty-five millions represents the unearned increment which an industrious and persistent lobby can give to a transaction of this kind.

WILLIAM ROSCOE THAYER.

Magnolia, Mass.

WHY IT STANDS ALONE

SIR.—The July and August issues of THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW appear to me to afford striking justification for the comment which I hear from intelligent men and women of my acquaintance—who seek truth and not simply a smug confirmation of their cherished opinions—that THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW stands almost alone among American magazines in the force and directness of its editorials and articles on current affairs.

I am moved to offer some comment upon this comment, because,

in my judgment, there has never been a time when firm declarations by serious students of politics, whether or not one agrees with their content, could perform a greater service to the nation, or when loose thinking and vague expression have had a greater power than they now have to set up a train of consequences so pernicious or so irremediable.

I do not, of course, agree with all your views on national polity, or with all those of your contributors; but it is when I am farthest from complete assent that your editorial policy confers upon me the greatest benefit. This policy I interpret to be one of furnishing your readers not merely with a series of brilliant, didactic statements but also with the facts upon which these statements rest.

When these facts supplement, as they must often do, the reader's own stock of information, it is a clear gain to him; when your deductions from the facts are at variance with those of the reader the clarity and vigor of your style compel him, if he is an honest student, to re-examine his position. If, at the end, he rejects your conclusions, this rejection is due to those temperamental differences which represent the gyroscopic principle in the philosophy of politics, and which give us, on the basis of accepted facts, a pull in one direction towards conservatism, and in the other towards radicalism.

The commonest form of attack to which you are subjected in the press and in the conversations of the politicians is of a character which furnishes a strong inferential guarantee of the accuracy of your facts and of the soundness of your judgments.

Any editorial you write, any article you publish, can be honestly assailed only upon two grounds: one that your facts are not facts, the other that, though your facts are facts, your reasoning from them is unsound. In the adverse criticisms of you which have reached my eye and my ear there is, in the main, a singular absence of either charge. For the most part your facts are not denied; your deductions from them are not challenged. Your guilt seems to lie in your failure to set up in front of your opponents' artillery an edifice constructed of misinformation and adorned with false reasoning, which at the first cannonade of truth and logic would crumble before the approving gaze of all men.

But, since truth is your bastion and logic your portcullis, your antagonists have to content themselves with marching round the fort and proclaiming to the world at large that the Knight within is a most malicious, prejudiced, and vindictive person.

The situation reminds me of a conversation I heard some years ago at a very formal dinner in London. A young Englishman, just returned from New York, was endeavoring to entertain an elderly spinster, bearing with great dignity a name highly distinguished in the home counties, whose travels had been limited on the north by the hydropathic establishments of Harrogate and on the south by the creameries of Devonshire. The young man, amply endowed with that admirable hatred of exaggeration which is one of the noblest traits of the Briton, remarked that the Woolworth building was higher than Windsor Castle—"Oh, quite!"

This disadvantageous comparison led the elderly spinster to express her fear that the young man had become Americanized; but when this horrid charge failed to change the young man's conception of

relative altitudes, the elderly spinster brought the discussion to an end by remarking:

"Well, Sir Henry, you have convinced me that, in your opinion, the Woolworth building is higher than Windsor Castle; but I hope you will not mind my saying, as an old friend of your dear mother, that, holding such an opinion, it is rather unpatriotic of you to express it."

There you are!

But the Woolworth building is higher than Windsor Castle—"Oh, quite!"

It seems to me that your great contribution to the current discussion of public affairs is that you avoid, on the one hand, that dripping sentimentality which in the exercises of a young ladies' seminary is pleasing to some and harmless to all, and, on the other hand, that vague babbling which, whether or not it is employed for the purpose of achieving those aims, poisons the well of thought and paralyzes the arm of action.

No one has described with greater succinctness and fidelity the dangers which spring from the kind of public utterances with which the country has been flooded during the past few months than has Lord Macaulay in the following passage:

Whatever Mr. Gladstone sees is refracted and distorted by a false medium of passions and prejudices. His style bears a remarkable analogy to his mode of thinking, and indeed exercises great influence on his mode of thinking. His rhetoric, though often good of its kind, darkens and perplexes the logic which it should illustrate. Half his acuteness and diligence, with a barren imagination and a scanty vocabulary, would have saved him from almost all his mistakes. He has one gift most dangerous to a speculator, a vast command of a kind of language, grave and majestic, but of vague and uncertain import. . . .

When propositions have been established, and nothing remains but to amplify and decorate them, this dim magnificence may be in place. But if it is admitted into a demonstration, it is very much worse than absolute nonsense; just as that transparent haze, through which the sailor sees capes and mountains of false sizes and in false bearings, is more dangerous than utter darkness. Now, Mr. Gladstone is fond of employing the phraseology of which we speak, in those parts of his work which require the utmost perspicuity and precision of which human language is capable; and in this way, he deludes first himself, and then his readers. The foundations of his theory, which ought to be buttressed of adamant, are made out of the flimsy materials which are fit only for perorations.

Whom the cap fits let him set it on his head.

With apologies for the length of this letter, and with my sincere thanks for the clean-cut, unequivocal material you are giving your readers of *THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW* and in *HARVEY'S WEEKLY*, I remain,

ALLEYNE IRELAND.

Catskill, N. Y.